

What is MORA?

The Maine Occupational Research Agenda (MORA) promotes occupational safety and health research in Maine. MORA grew out of the Maine Department of Labor's first symposium on occupational safety and health research, held in August 2000.

One of MORA's first activities was to examine the available occupational injury and illness data in Maine and identify strengths and shortcomings. Based on that data and on interviews with interested parties, MORA set priorities for research. MORA's next step is to identify research partners and funding in order to encourage research in these priority areas.

MORA's current research priorities are Occupational Asthma, Cost Drivers, Toxic Exposures, Fatalities, Musculoskeletal Disorders, and Aging Workforce.

Occupational safety and health research is important because it helps identify successful approaches to health and safety concerns. Research can also pinpoint cost-effective prevention strategies. And it can help employers find out whether the changes they make actually do improve safety and health.

In addition to promoting research, MORA supports a statewide occupational injury and illness data system for Maine. Gaps in available data make it difficult to get a complete picture of the state's injury and illness problems. A comprehensive system will help identify where resources are needed and can do the most good.

"Using Research to Improve Safety and Health" is the theme for the MORA conference May 21 and 22, 2003 at the University of New England Portland campus. Speakers include Maine employers, academic researchers and government representatives, all of whom will speak on how research impacts safety and health.

Find out more about MORA at www.maine.gov/labor/bls/MORA.htm. Conference registration materials will be available in early 2003. To contact MORA, call Terry Hathaway at the Department of Labor, 207-624-6440. (Email: terry.m.hathaway@Maine.gov).



*UNE Portland Campus
Site of MORA 2003
Conference*



**MAINE
OCCUPATIONAL
RESEARCH
AGENDA**

MORA welcomes the participation of interested individuals, businesses and organizations.

Thank you

On behalf of the Maine Bureau of Labor Standards we would like to thank all employers who responded to the annual **Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses**, which is based on the OSHA logs. Ninety-five percent of Maine businesses surveyed in 2001 responded; Maine's response rate has never been higher!

The data collected is of great value for **SafetyWorks!**. We design training and consultation programs for industries with high injury and illness rates. And the data helps us measure changes over time. Employers and private consultants use our data to compare specific worksites to the state and the nation as a whole.

Injury and illness data for 2001 will be available in January 2003. For more information contact Steve Landrie at (207) 624-6453, e-mail steven.p.landrie@Maine.gov, or visit our Web site www.Maine.gov/labor/bls/techserv.htm.

Award-winning Customer Service Staff Answer Your Calls



Citing "user friendly service (and) accurate and timely information" the Justice Action Group recognized the Bureau of Labor Standards Customer Service Unit as a model for good practices in state government. Labor Commissioner Valerie Landry presented the award to CSU members Rachel Newman, Gary DiMarco, Nancy Longfellow and Gail Richardson.

Fatal Occupational Injuries in Maine 2001

In 2001, 23 workers died as a result of workplace injuries in Maine.

Of these fatalities,

- 10 involved transportation accidents
- 5 resulted from falls
- 3 involved contact with equipment
- 5 were the result of other events
- 8 of the workers were employed in the wholesale/retail trade,
- 7 in agriculture/fishing/forestry,
- 4 in construction, and
- 4 in other industries

The complete report is at www.Maine.gov/labor/bls/fatalsum.htm

Remember: Post your summary of occupational injuries and illnesses

If your business is required to maintain the OSHA 300 Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses, be sure to properly fill out the 300A summary form in January:

- 1) Copy your totals from the 300 log to the left side of the 300A.
- 2) Include your average employment and hours worked on the right side of the 300A.
- 3) The person who signs the 300A must be a company executive, not the safety or human resource manager. The executive who signs must be:
 - a) an owner of the company (only if the company is a sole proprietorship or partnership), or
 - b) an officer of the corporation, or
 - c) the highest ranking company official working at the establishment, or
 - d) the immediate supervisor of the highest ranking company official working at the establishment.

The 2002 OSHA 300A must be posted at a site where all employees can see it (such as a bulletin board) from February 1 through April 30, 2003.

If you don't know whether your business has to keep OSHA logs or if you have any questions about the OSHA 300, 300A or 301 forms, call Steve Landrie at 624-6453.

Visit our web site at <http://www.Maine.gov/labor/blsmain.htm>



OSHA Revises Exit Routes Standard

OSHA has rewritten requirements for exiting buildings quickly during an emergency. The revised *Exit Routes, Emergency Action Plans, and Fire Prevention Plans Standard* is written in a user-friendly, easy-to-understand format. It became effective December 7, 2002. Find more information at www.osha.gov.

Sign up for SafetyWorks! Classes

If you haven't received your schedule of classes for winter/spring 2003, call us for a copy or find it at www.Maine.gov/labor/bls/traincls.htm

The classes are free, but they fill up fast, so register early!

SafetyWorks! Recognized for Exceptional Service

On November 13, 2002, the Maine Marine Trade Association awarded SafetyWorks! the Association's Francis L. Pierce Award for Outstanding Service to the Maine Marine Trades Industry. The award was presented in recognition of the "tremendous contribution" SafetyWorks! has made in helping the industry create safer workplaces.



David Wacker received the Francis L. Pierce Award on behalf of SafetyWorks. From left: Graham Wright, Boothbay Region Boatyard; John Thomsen, Cummins Northeast, Inc.; David Wacker; and Norm Pierce, Pierce Yachts

Newsletter articles are written by individual authors and are not necessarily products of the Maine Department of Labor or its staff. Information in the articles is not a substitute for official policy or regulations. The editor is Lynne Lamstein, director of outreach and education for the Bureau of Labor Standards. Tel: 207-624-6400, TTY (for people who are deaf and hard of hearing): 800-794-1110, e-mail: webmaster.bls@Maine.gov

The Maine Department of Labor provides equal opportunity employment and programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Warning

Winter weather is early this year and with it comes the risk of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. Warning signs of CO poisoning are flu-like symptoms without fever (such as headache, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, drowsiness, and confusion). CO poisoning can result in coma and death.

CO is an odorless gas emitted when most fuels burn. Improper operation or placement of heating or power sources can result in poisoning when CO gas builds up in enclosed spaces. A Bureau of Health study of the CO poisoning epidemic during the January 1998 ice storm power outages found that improper placement of a gasoline generator, such as in a basement or garage, significantly increased the risk of poisoning. Using a kerosene heater in a room without opening windows or doors to other rooms can also lead to CO poisoning.

To Avoid CO Poisoning During the Heating Season:

- Place generators outdoors, well away from windows or doors. DO NOT place generators in an enclosed or semi-enclosed space (such as basement, cellar bulkhead, attached garage).
- Use kerosene heaters only in a well-ventilated room. Keep doors to other rooms open or keep a window open at least one inch. Use only K-1 grade fuel in kerosene heaters. Follow instructions for setting the wick height.
- Do not use outdoor cooking devices indoors (such as gas or charcoal grills, gas camp stoves).
- Do not use indoor gas cooking stoves for heat.
- Keep chimney flue and a window open when burning decorative gas fireplace logs.
- Keep a carbon monoxide monitor certified by the Underwriters Laboratory, available in many hardware stores. If battery powered, replace batteries at least annually.

What Should You Do If You Suspect CO Poisoning?

If you or anyone in your home or at work suspect you are being poisoned by carbon monoxide, first leave the building immediately, then call your local fire department or 911 or local emergency number. Seek medical attention by contacting either the Maine Poison Control Center (1-800-442-6305) or your physician **after** you have left the building. Do not go back into the building until you know the CO levels are safe.

Visit our web site at <http://www.Maine.gov/labor/blsmain.htm>

<i>MORA</i>	<i>1,2</i>
<i>Recordkeeping Reminder</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Carbon Monoxide Warning</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Awards</i>	<i>3,4</i>

Fall 2002

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Safety and health is about people...of course. But sometimes we need to look to numbers to help protect people. Statistics and research findings tell us not only the who, what, where and when of injuries, they also lead us to successful solutions to workplace problems.

This issue includes data on the fatal occupational injuries in Maine in 2001. You'll also find a reminder about OSHA recordkeeping — Your accurate records help us to correctly identify problem areas and craft applicable solutions.

Looking to the future, the MORA conference next May will be an opportunity to look deeper at how research can help in our ongoing efforts to promote safe and healthy work and work environments.

**Mark your calendars for May 21 and 22, 2003.
These are numbers you'll want to remember.**



Michael V. Frett, Director
Bureau of Labor Standards